which fulfill the basic criteria of minimum capacity of 1000 MW for thermal and 500 MW for hydel projects subject to certification by the Ministry of Power of the required conditions having been met. Thereafter three more thermal power projects of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) have been certified by the Ministry of Power.

(b) The three mega projects of NTPC referred to above fall in the States of Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

(c) Import of capital equipment is free of customs duty for any power generation project which meets the various conditions laid down under the mega power policy and is duly certified by the Ministry of Power.

(d) In addition to the customs duty waiver, the mega power policy also provides for deemed export benefits as per the EXIM policy to domestic bidders for the mega power projects. It also provides for continuance of the income-tax holiday regime with the provision that the tax holiday period of 10 years can be claimed by a promoter in any block of 10 years, within the first 15 years.

Implementation of PMGSY

378. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that habitations of population of 500 or more are proposed to be connected by roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana by the end of 2007;

(b) if so, the details of roads completed by 2003 and proposed to be undertaken during 2004 to 2007;

(c) the steps taken to ensure that PMGSY is implemented in time; and

(d) how the persons engaged in PMGSY are proposed to be engaged after 2007?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana seeks to provide connectivity to all Unconnected Habitations in the rural areas with a population of more than 500 persons, through good All-weather roads, by the end of Tenth Plan Period (2007). In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttaranchal) Desert Areas and Tribal (Schedule-V) areas, the objective is to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above.

(b) 21,856 road works have been completed by the States upto end of May, 2004. The list of road works proposed to be undertaken in a State is to be finalized each year by the District Panchayats and they are cleared on year to year basis with reference to the Annual allocation for the State.

(c) The programme is being executed by the Executing Agencies identified by the State Governments. The progress of implementation is being monitored, to ensure the completion of the works within the stipulated time and as per Guidelines, by the senior officers of the Executing Agency and the Nodal Department of the State Government. In addition, at the central level the Ministry of Rural Development also monitors the progress through periodic reviews.

(d) The PMGSY Guidelines envisages that the Programme Implementation Units (PIUs) will be manned by competent technical personnel from amongst the available staff or through deputationists. No new posts will be created for the purpose.

Raise up of cost of houses under Indira Awas Yojana

†379. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to raise the cost-price of the houses which is at present twenty thousand rupees to be constructed for the persons living below the poverty-line under the Indira Awas Yojana;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) to (c) Under the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), the ceiling on assistance for construction of new houses has been increased from Rs. 20,000/- to Rs. 25,000/- per unit for the plain areas and from Rs. 22,000/- to Rs. 27,500/- per unit for the hilly/difficult areas with effect from 1.4.2004. The upper limit in respect of conversion of kutcha houses into semi/pucca houses (Upgradation) has also been increased from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 12,500/- per unit from the same date for all areas.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.